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DAN SMOOT

POVERTY FIGHTING IN NEW YORK

Spending tax money on antipoverty programs to stop Negro riots is like fighting fire with gasoline. Indeed, there is proof that tax money (from Sargent Shriver's Office of Economic Opportunity, command-post agency for the poverty war) is used to incite and subsidize Negro mob violence.

The biggest antipoverty operation is in Harlem. It is called HARYOU-ACT (the HARYOU meaning Harlem Youth). Its primary purpose is to combat juvenile delinquency. Its director gets $25,000 a year in salary. He has 37 administrative underlings who get more than $10,000 a year each.[1]

For the 2-year period ending June 30, 1966, HARYOU-ACT received 13 million, 400 thousand tax dollars from the Office of Economic Opportunity.[2]

On September 24, 1965, a preliminary audit disclosed discrepancies in HARYOU-ACT's books totalling hundreds of thousands of dollars. Details of the audit were not made public. On September 28, 1965, OEO gave the agency an additional 827,000 tax dollars.[3]

On March 30, 1967, the New York City Controller issued the first official public report on an audit of HARYOU-ACT's books, revealing that:

—hundreds of thousands of tax dollars granted to HARYOU-ACT had vanished without a trace;

—the agency still owed commercial creditors at least $600,000;

—the agency owed federal and state governments nearly $200,000 which had been taken out of the salaries of poverty warriors as withholding tax;

—more than $425,000 had been spent on "guard service," which apparently did little good, because $20,000 in equipment disappeared during the first 16 months of HARYOU-ACT operations.[4]

HARYOU-ACT leases Camp Highmount at Colchester, New York, and transports Harlem Negro children there each summer for vacations and outings. Colchester Properties, Inc. (owner of the camp) sued HARYOU-ACT for "wrecking and burning" damages, resulting from "malicious mischief" but not covered by insurance.

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On July 12, 1967, the New York State Supreme Court awarded a judgment of $40,820 against HARYOU-ACT, in favor of Colchester Properties. HARYOU-ACT did not pay the judgment. In early August, 1967, HARYOU-ACT's vacationing Negro children burned down the mess hall at Camp Highmount. HARYOU-ACT was forced to close the camp and send the children home. Two weeks later—August 16, 1967—the City of New York granted HARYOU-ACT 40,820 tax dollars to pay the judgment to Colchester Properties, so that HARYOU-ACT would not have to curtail its operations.[5]

The HARYOU-ACT activity most closely related to Negro riots was its grant—in the summer of 1965—of $44,000 for the Harlem Black Arts Repertory Theater-School,[6] which was founded by LeRoi Jones, a white-hating Negro militant who is a leader in the black-power movement.

Jones wrote and produced plays seething with rage against all whites, generally portrayed as homosexuals,[7] described by Jones as "devils, beasts, and liars,"[8] who (Jones says) should be killed.[9] Jones says:

"The force we want is of 20 million spooks [Negroes] storming America with furious cries and unstoppable weapons. We want actual explosions and actual brutality."[7]

In response to complaints about his "vile racist plays in the language of the gutter unfit for youngsters and the audience," LeRoi Jones said:

"I don't see anything wrong with hating white people."[1,7]

James Kellecher, spokesman for the OEO, justifying the use of tax money to subsidize Jones' theater-school, said:

"We'd rather see these kids fussing on the stage than on the streets."[7]

LeRoi Jones attended Howard University in Washington, D. C. (the alma mater of Stokely Carmichael). He received a master's degree in comparative literature at Columbia. In 1965, he was on the faculty at Columbia, teaching creative writing. In one lecture about whites, Jones is quoted as advising Negroes to "smash their jelly white faces."[10]

In an essay written in 1965, LeRoi Jones said:

"In Harlem . . . as director of the Black Arts Repertory Theater School, I have issued a call for a Black Nation. In Harlem, where 600,000 Black People reside. The first act must be the nationalization of all properties and resources belonging to white people, within the boundaries of the Black Nation."[11]

Barron's magazine (July 31, 1967) reports that Jones' Black Arts Theater received a total of 115 thousand tax dollars from HARYOU-ACT before the flow of federal funds stopped (at the end of summer, 1965). When the tax money was cut off, the Theater went out of business as a producer of plays; but it was used for other purposes.

On the night of March 16, 1966, New York City police raided the building (owned by LeRoi Jones) which had housed the Black Arts Theater. They found an arsenal of guns and other weapons and a rifle range in the basement.[12]

LeRoi Jones is a resident of Newark, New Jersey. On July 14, 1967 (the day the governor of New Jersey sent national guardsmen into Newark, because the city was in the grip of "a criminal insurrection by people who say they hate the white man"), Jones was arrested in the riot section of Newark. He had 2 loaded 32-caliber pistols. He was in a green Volkswagen station wagon with two other Negroes. Police had had out an alarm for such a vehicle containing 3 men who had been seen firing guns in the area.[6]

Quickly released after this arrest, Jones attended the black-power conference held in Newark (July 20-24, 1967). In one speech to the conference, Jones said:

"The Italians who are running this city aren't equipped to run our lives. These dogs treat us like animals. We're not animals. They are. We're beautiful. These dogs are here to kill you. The next time, don't break into liquor stores. Go where you can get something to protect yourself."[13]

On July 30, 1967, a gang of militant Negroes demonstrated on the steps of the courthouse in

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Newark, New Jersey, threatening new violence. Among them was LeRoi Jones, who said:

"Next time, we aren't going to go out there with sticks and bottles."[14]

On November 6, 1967, Jones and two other Negroes were found guilty of illegal possession of firearms during the July riots in Newark.[14]

LeRoi Jones is not the only militant Negro leader whose hate and violence have been subsidized with tax money given by Sargent Shriver's OEO to HARYOU-ACT and related antipoverty agencies in New York City.

Another is Jesse Gray (who has been identified as a communist[15]). Gray led the Harlem rent strike of 1963[16] and was involved in the bloody Harlem riot of July, 1964. On July 19, 1964, Gray harangued a crowd of Negro militants in the Mount Morris Presbyterian Church, asking them to help organize 50,000 Negro guerrillas for war against the white power structure in Harlem.[17]

Gray next attracted national attention on August 7, 1967, when two busloads of Negroes from Harlem and Brooklyn—with a few whites intermingled—pushed guards aside and swarmed into spectators' galleries of the House of Representatives in Washington, chanting "rats cause riots" (the House had rejected an administration request for $40 million to fight rats). Many of the demonstrators were poverty warriors, getting tax money from the OEO. Their leaders were Jesse Gray and James Harrell, employed by an antipoverty group called Harlem Back Street Youth. The most recent known grant of tax money to Harlem Back Street Youth was $16,000, given by the OEO in July, 1967.[16, 18]

When capitol police tried to remove the demonstrators, a brief ugly riot occurred. One Negro pulled a razor to slash a police officer, who drew a gun to defend himself. One policeman who grappled with the rioters was admitted to Bethesda Naval Hospital after coughing up blood. Several officers were treated for minor injuries.[16,18]

As the poverty warriors were herded out of the building, Representative Frank Brasco (Brooklyn Democrat) accompanied them, trying to soothe the angriest, hoping he could keep them from being arrested.[18]

A powerfully built Negro, who called himself Black Power, said:

"It's better you don't pass your rat bill. That way we'll be more angrier. We'll level this whole U.S.A. That we can't burn up we'll blow up. Keep your crumbs. Keep your rat bill crumbs."[18]

Only 8 people were arrested (6 men, 2 women). From inside a police wagon as it drove away, one woman screamed:

"Swine! Pigs! Foul swine!"[18]

A District of Columbia court released the 8 arrested rioters on bonds of $10 each.[16]

On August 16, 1967, Jesse Gray took another load of poverty warriors from Harlem to Washington for a demonstration against the House of Representatives for not passing Johnson's rat-control bill. But this time the demonstration was peaceful. New York members of Congress met with Gray and his poverty warriors in a committee room.

Gray said:

"I'm saying to you congressmen to tell us what you're able to do on the possibilities of getting action on the bill! . . ."[19]

New York Representatives Frank Brasco (Democrat) and Ogden Reid (Republican) assured Mr. Gray the rat-control request would get prompt action. Senator Jacob Javits sent word that he would offer a rat-control rider to a housing bill.[19] Jesse Gray threatened to demand that he be seated in the House as Harlem's representative until the controversy over Adam Clayton Powell is resolved.[20]

On September 20, 1967, the House reversed itself, and, by a vote of 227-173, added a $40 million rat-control rider to a $1 billion health bill.

Early in the summer of 1967, New York City launched a major summer entertainment program intended "to cool off the ghettos" by keeping kids off the streets. "We have done everything in this

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city to make sure we have a stable summer," said Mayor John Lindsay. But after one "stabilizing" event—a rock-and-roll concert in Central Park—150 Negroes stormed through Manhattan, breaking windows and looting Fifth Avenue stores. Police caught 23 of the looters. Four of them were Harlem antipoverty workers who get up to $90 a week from the city.[21] One of them wore a sweater bearing the name of an OEO-funded agency, "Harlem Youth Opportunities Unlimited."[22]

Riots in Spanish Harlem in July, 1967, left 2 people dead, then spread to a Spanish-speaking neighborhood in the Bronx. Burton Roberts, chief assistant district attorney in the Bronx, has said that antipoverty officials encouraged the rioting in the Bronx by telling their poverty warriors that "$2 million damage would bring $20 million in antipoverty funds to the neighborhood." The district attorney said he warned antipoverty officials they will be held responsible if they incite more riots.[23] He did not say why they were not prosecuted for inciting the riot in July, 1967.

The war on poverty, in New York as elsewhere, is as U.S. Representative Paul Fino (New York Republican) calls it, "a well-heeled gravy train for agitators, Black Power advocates, and communists." Representative Fino revealed that the poverty war's Neighborhood Youth Corps in New York City is run by Robert Schrank who has been associated with many communist causes.[24]

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FOOTNOTES

(1) "Statement Of Congressman Wendell Wyatt (R. Ore.) Concerning the 1966 Poverty Program Bill," undated press release, 3 pp.

(2) AP dispatch from New York, Mar. 30, 1967

(3) Article, by Peter Kihss, *The New York Times*, Oct. 11, 1965, pp. 1, 54

(4) "Report Blasts Haryou on Lost $$," New York *Daily News*, Mar. 31, 1967

(5) *The New York Times*, Aug. 23, 1967, p. 49

(6) Article by Thomas Buckley, *The New York Times*, Oct. 20, 1965, p. 37

(7) AP dispatch from New York City, Dec. 13, 1965

(8) *Human Events*, Oct. 23, 1965, p. 5

(9) *Human Events*, Feb. 5, 1966, p. 5

(10) *The New York Times*, July 15, 1967, p. 11

(11) Article by Robert Bone, *The New York Times Book Review*, May 8, 1966, p. 3

(12) AP dispatch from New York, Mar. 18, 1966

(13) *Life*, Aug. 4, 1967, p. 26

(14) AP article, July 31, 1967; article by Walter H. Waggoner, *The New York Times*, Nov. 7, 1967, p. 24

(15) *U. S. News & World Report*, Aug. 3, 1964, p. 25

(16) UPI dispatch from Washington, Aug. 8, 1967

(17) Article by Junius Griffin, *The New York Times*, July 20, 1964, p. 16

(18) UPI dispatch from Washington, Aug. 8, 1967

(19) AP dispatch from Washington, Aug. 17, 1967

(20) AP dispatch from Washington, Aug. 17, 1967

(21) *Time* magazine, Aug. 4, 1967, p. 14

(22) *Barron's*, July 31, 1967

(23) *The Wanderer*, Aug. 17, 1967, p. 2

(24) *Human Events*, Oct. 7, 1967, p. 4

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